

REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT - PY 2003

STATE: ALABAMA

DATE: SEPTEMBER 30, 2004

I. PURPOSE / GOAL

The purpose of the Reemployment Services (RES) Program is to improve the quality and quantity of direct reemployment services for UI claimants. RES will build on existing initiatives to supplement Wagner-Peyser Act allotments to increase services to UI claimants over and above regular services while targeting the funds where they are needed, and will have the most positive outcomes.

The goals of the RES Program, as stated in the PY 2003 Plan, include the following:

- 1) increasing the number of UI claimants entering employment.
- 2) increasing the number of UI claimants referred to jobs.
- 3) increasing the number of job development contacts for UI claimants.
- 4) increasing the number of UI claimants participating in Job Search Workshops.
- 5) increasing the number of job search plans for UI claimants.
- 6) reducing the duration of UI claimants receiving benefits.
- 7) reducing the rate of UI benefit exhaustions.

Review of the results achieved in these performance measures revealed a marked increase in the overall quantity and quality of reemployment services provided to UI claimants during PY 2003. Five (5) of the seven (7) stated goals were exceeded, i.e., the number of UI claimants entering employment, the number of UI claimants referred to jobs, the number of UI claimants participating in Job Search Workshops, the number of job search plans for UI claimants, and reducing the duration of UI claimants receiving benefits.

Two goals were not met. Reduction in the exhaustion rate of UI claimants receiving benefits was narrowly missed, edging slightly upward to 32.9% from PY 2002's 32.7%. This does, however, represent significant slowing in the increase in the exhaustion rate since PY 2001's 22.6%.

The other unmet goal - increasing the number of job development contacts for UI claimants, missed the goal of 2,757 by only 188 (-7%) contacts. Staff reductions numbering 33 positions (-7.4%) since PY 2002, contributed to the short fall in this labor intensive service.

II. ALLOCATION OF GRANT

Accomplishment of the goals of the program was pursued through the provision of direct services to UI claimants. Therefore, the entirety of the RES grant was directed toward the allocation of nine (9.0) positions distributed among twenty (20) field offices. Targeting of these offices was determined by their proportionate share of the state's UI first payments, thus demonstrating need for these services, and by their likelihood for the most positive outcomes, as determined by comparative analysis of Workforce data, i.e., employment and unemployment levels and trends.

Offices selected and their position allocations for PY 2003 were: Albertville - 0.5, Andalusia - 0.2, Trussville - 0.5, Brewton - 0.5, Cullman - 0.2, Decatur - 0.4, Dothan - 0.3, Eufaula - 0.4, Ft. Payne - 0.2, Gadsden - 0.5, Greenville - 0.5, Huntsville - 0.5, Jasper - 0.2, Mobile - 1.0, Montgomery - 0.7, Oneonta - 0.2, Opelika - 0.4, Sheffield - 1.3, Talladega - 0.2, and Tuscaloosa - 0.3.

Delivery of Reemployment Services by the Employment Service was accomplished through the state's One-Stop Career Center System. Alabama has thirty (30) comprehensive One-Stop Centers and twenty (20) affiliated one-stop sites linked electronically to the Career Center System blanketing the state to provide reemployment services. While all points of service are charged with providing reemployment services to UI claimants, RES resources were concentrated in those areas identified above with the greatest need, as well as the likelihood for success.

III. UTILIZATION / COST

RES-funded positions were fully utilized during PY 2003 to provide reemployment services to UI claimants. The program year ended June 30, 2004, with 9.39 positions paid and all RES funds (\$550,972) expended. Virtually all costs reflect direct personal services/benefits costs or allocated positional costs associated with the 9.0 field positions funded by this grant.

IV. ACTIVITIES / OVERVIEW

Early intervention with direct job search assistance was determined to be the most effective strategy to assist UI claimants in returning to employment in the shortest possible time. This strategy was effected through the following services:

- 1) Referral and Placement
- 2) Development of Job Search Plans
- 3) Job Development
- 4) Provision of Labor Market Information
- 5) Job Search Workshops, including orientation to the One-Stop Resource Center
- 6) Follow-up, to determine the need for further services

This strategy was conveyed to the field via ES Memorandum stating administrative policy on Reemployment Services, and through Local Office Annual Plans directing each office to develop a written plan on the provision of reemployment services to UI claimants.

Core employment services were provided to UI claimants as appropriate in PY 2003, to include selection and referral to jobs, assessment, testing, job search planning, provision of labor market information, and job development. Selection and referral to work services for UI claimants were enhanced through amendment of administrative policy which recognized UI Claimants for priority of services, after Veterans, to include referral to job openings. This formal designation of UI claimants as a priority group recognizes the Employment Service's commitment to providing priority of services to UI claimants.

Job Search Workshop activity was intensified during PY 2003, in conjunction with a WIA initiative to serve TAA and WARN Rapid Response claimants. Job Search Workshops were expanded and made available to UI claimants through all Career Centers or affiliated locations. This intensive, cutting-edge, staff-assisted service focuses on job search, application completion, resume preparation, and interviewing skills utilizing Workshop aids such as video tapes and workbooks. Training was provided as needed to all local office Job-Shop facilitators.

"Orientation" to the Career Center Resource Room remained a vital and integral part of every workshop. Claimant awareness of the resource room and its variety of print, video, and electronic career guidance tools and materials have proven vital in the empowerment of job seekers to pursue self-directed service or require only limited staff assisted service. Internet access is available at all career centers.

Partner agencies in the Career Center System were informed and kept abreast of the RES program and services available to assist UI claimants. Claimants determined to have employment barriers impeding or precluding their return to suitable work were referred to appropriate partner agencies in the One-Stop for more intensive services assistance. Partners in turn were also encouraged to refer qualified clients to appropriate RES-related services. Referral to intensive services and training was accomplished as indicated in the plan. All One-Stop partners have access to the profiled claimants in order to assist in their return to work.

The Employment Service, through the One-Stop Career Center system, is the primary service provider for Worker Profiling Reemployment Services (WPRS) providing services to those claimants identified by UI according to profile data. Profiled UI claimants are provided services on a timely basis with individualized service plans for their return to the work force. While an integral part of RES, worker profiling was inoperative for the first ten months of PY 2003, owing to programming problems associated with the conversion to UI Call Centers in October 2002. Reinstatement of the profiling program effective May 2004, has not yet, however, generated significant profiling data for analysis for PY 2003.

IV. ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PERFORMANCE GOALS

Accomplishment of the goals outlined in the RES Plan submitted for PY 2003, was aided by improvement in the economy as Alabama's employment grew by 2.0% and unemployment declined 0.1 to 5.7% for the program year.

Performance goals were achieved in five (5) of the seven (7) performance standards measured for PY 2003. Performance standards achieved were 1) increasing the number of UI claimants entering employment, 2) increasing the number of UI claimants referred to jobs, 3) increasing the number of UI claimants participating in Job Search Workshops, 4) increasing the number of job search plans for UI claimants, and 5) reducing the duration of UI claimants receiving benefits.

The two (2) goals not met were 1) reduction in the exhaustion rate of UI claimants receiving benefits and 2) increasing the number of job development contacts for UI claimants. A reduction in the exhaustion rate was narrowly missed as the rate edged upward slightly to 32.9% from PY 2002's 32.7%. While a reduction wasn't achieved, it should be noted that the negligible increase in the rate was a significant improvement from the PY 2001-2002 jump from 22.6% to 32.7%.

Failure to increase the number of job development contacts for UI claimants, missed the goal of 2,757 contacts by only 188 (-7%). Staff reductions numbering 33 positions (-7.4%) during this period appeared to be the primary factor contributing to the short fall in this labor intensive service.

It would appear from analysis of these performance indicators that the PY 2003 RES Plan was on target and brought about increased services to UI claimants. Following is a summation of the outcomes/accomplishments as measured by the performance indicators of the goals stated in the Plan:

- The number of UI claimants registered in PY 2003, numbered 161,948 representing an increase of 1.63% while total registrations declined -2.76%. Claimants' share of the applicant pool increased from 41.2% to 43.1%.
- Job search activities were provided for 151,062 UI claimants in PY 2003, representing an increase of 3.86%. Job search activities for all individuals declined -1.57% during this same period.
 - Referrals to jobs numbered 284,043 in PY 2003 for 85,032 UI claimants. This represented a 15.69% increase in the number of UI claimants referred and a 29.12% increase in the number of referrals made to UI claimants. This concerted effort on behalf of UI claimants more than doubled the overall increase in referrals (5.83%).

- Job Search Planning services numbered 136,449 for UI claimants in PY 2003 representing an increase of 1.48% while JSPs overall declined - 2.44%.
- Job Search Workshops served 6,333 UI claimants in PY 2003, an increase of 142.46% which exceeded the overall increase of 135.45%.
- Provision of Specific Labor Market Information to UI claimants numbered 106,847 in PY 2003 representing an increase of 4.59% while overall provision of LMI increased only 3.17%.
- Testing services were administered to 1,987 UI claimants in PY 2003 representing an increase of 2.69% over PY 2002. Testing for all individuals during this same period declined -10.08%.
- Job development contacts for UI claimants numbered 3,152 in PY 2003 down -5.43%. This loss, however, was significantly less than the -11.88% contraction in job developments incurred for all applicants.
- Entered Employment for UI claimants numbered 46,529 in PY 2003 representing an increase of 5,278 or 12.79% over the previous year. This is almost triple the increase posted for all individuals indicating the additional emphasis on selection and referral of UI claimants.
- The duration of UI claimants receiving benefits declined in PY 2003 to 12.6 weeks, down from 13.1 weeks in PY 2002.
- The rate of UI benefit exhaustions edged upward slightly from 32.7% last year to 32.9% in PY 2003.

Although not included as performance standards in this year's RES program appraisal, it should be noted that Labor Exchange Performance Standards, i.e., Entered Employment Rate (EER) and Entered Employment Retention Rate (EERR) for eligible claimants (EER- 70%, EERR- 87%) exceeded the rates for all job seekers (EER- 69%, EERR- 84%) in PY 2003.

V. CONCLUSIONS / PROPOSED ACTION

While results of the performance measures indicate that not all of the goals for the Reemployment Services Plan for PY 2003 Plan were achieved, the overall impact of the RES program reflects a significant increase in both the quality and quantity of reemployment services provided to UI claimants. Only the measures of rate of benefit exhaustion and job development contacts did not meet their goals. Failure to achieve these goals was felt to be linked more to economic conditions and budget driven staffing

reductions rather than to the strategies implemented to achieve these goals.

It should also be noted that all of the indicators of accomplishment revealed that UI claimants fared significantly better than non claimants in PY 2003. This comparison strongly indicates that the strategies and efforts associated with the Reemployment Services Plan to assist UI claimants to return to employment was successful.

Based upon the positive performance outcomes achieved this year, no major actions or changes are proposed for the RES PY 2004 plan.